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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8300
INFO RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA 3974
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC
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SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR NEA/MAG, ISN/ECC

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MOROCCO SEEKS CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND SEAPORT SECURITY
CONSULTATIONS

REF: 03/19/08 - KUHN-JIMENEZ E-MAIL

Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

11. (U) This is an action message. Please see para 8.

12. (SBU) On March 24, Econoff met with Nouredine Moujahid, Chief of Staff for International Cooperation, Ministry of Interior, to discuss new dates for a consultation visit to Washington by Moroccan border security officials. Moujahid proposed that the visit occur from April 5-12, but that it be split into two, with two separate agendas, both headed by Governor Khalid Zerouali, the Interior Ministry's Director for Migration and Border Security Issues. The first delegation would like to focus on crisis management, with visits to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Targeting Center. The second delegation would focus on seaport security and requests a visit to the Port of Baltimore.

13. (SBU) Moujahid said Morocco was interested in establishing a national command facility that could respond to both natural disasters and terrorist/security incidents. He requested a tailored program for 6 officials 7-9 April that would include consultations with senior FEMA officials and a visit to the National Targeting Center. The delegation would arrive on Saturday and Sunday, 5-6 April, and depart 10 April. Moujahid named only 5 members of the delegation.

14. (SBU) Delegation Members:
Gouverneur-Director Khalid Zerouali, MOI.
Colonel Mohamed Benziane, Office of Civil Protection, MOI.
Mohamed Manchoud, Chief of Budget Division, MOI.
Mohamed Youssef Safouane, MOI.
Sec-Gen Mohamed Assila, Crisis Management Division, MOI.

15. (SBU) A second 5-member team would arrive on 9 April with a focus on export/import control and port security. Gouverneur Zerouali would remain in Washington to head this delegation, with the other names to follow. This group desires a visit to the Port of Baltimore and consultations on issues related to the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program. Moujahid asked if USG funding, specifically hotel accommodation, was available to help with the costs of both visits.

16. (SBU) Econoff told Moujahid he would forward all the requests to Washington, reminded him that the original 26-28 February consultations involved no USG funding, and recommended he notify and coordinate the visit with the Moroccan Embassy in Washington as well.

17. (SBU) Comment: Zerouali, who is responsible for the security of Morocco's land, sea, and air frontiers is apparently being groomed for higher positions. He received both A/S McNerney and Amb Swing (IOM) during their recent visits to Morocco. He speaks fluent English and has repeatedly expressed his desire for U.S. assistance in the improvement of Morocco's crisis response capability, export/import controls, and border security. We realize that arranging the proposed visit on such short notice is difficult, but believe it would pay dividends in further reinforcing bilateral cooperation with key players on critical security issues, including development of a dual-use national control list. It would also facilitate Moroccan support for the EXBS Transshipment Conference in Tangier May 20-22, and improve Morocco's ability to supervise commerce through its new transshipment port, a strong USG interest given the future likelihood of a direct Tangier Med-East Coast shipping line. End Comment.

18. (U) Action request: Embassy Rabat requests Washington agencies offer the Moroccans a program generally in accordance with their proposed dates and activities, without offering USG funding assistance.

RILEY